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| 1 EXPOSITION OF CASTLE INTERIORS | 10 MULTIFUNCTIONAL HALL, EDUCATION | 19 TECHNICAL FACILITIES | 28 INDOOR BIKE STORAGE |
| 2 CASTLE GARDENS | 11 RELIQUARY EXPOSITION | 20 HERB GARDEN | 29 ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRAINING SITE FOR CHILDREN |
| 3 INTERACTIVE CASTLE TRAIL | 12 LIQUID TREASURE EXPOSITION | 21 SCHOOL, ICE HOUSE | 30 WATER MISTER (ONLY ON HOT DAYS) |
| 4 CASTLE TERRACES | 13 TICKET OFFICE, CASTLE SHOP, TOILETS AND CLOAKROOMS | 22 BREWERY CELLARS | 31 STARTING POINT OF THE CASTLE TOUR |
| 5 VISITOR ROOM | 14 CASTLE | 23 PLAY ELEMENTS FROM THE PAST | 32 PARKING SPACES FOR BICYCLES |
| 6 ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING | 15 CASTLE PARK | 24 PÉTANQUE | 33 DOCKING STATION |
| 7 THE LAKE TERRACE | 16 CASTLE COURTYARD | 25 THE FIRST COURTYARD | 34 INFORMATION PANEL ON THE HISTORY OF THE CASTLE GARDENS |
| 8 CASTLE OBSERVATION TOWER | 17 OFFICE HOUSE | 26 EAST / EAST | 35 CASTLE KITCHEN |
| 9 CAFÉ | 18 UPPER COURTYARD | 27 BEAUFORT WIND STRENGTH SCALE | 36 ENTRANCE TO THE CASTLE LOOKOUT TOWER |

Pets - allowed only in outdoor areas. Fresh water bowls and dog waste bags are available.

Cyclists - SHZ Bečov is involved in the Cyclists Welcome project. There are free bike racks, covered bike and luggage storage and an electric bike docking station in the castle grounds.

For children - and for all those who like to play we have a practice archaeological site, in the gardens and in the castle courtyard play elements from the past (wooden horses, stilts, driving hoop, petanque playground), on hot days a (water) mister in the gardens. Children's costumes are available to be borrowed at the ticket office. There is an interactive trail around the castle. At the castle lookout you can try to measure the strength of the wind using the so-called Beaufort scale, or you can also purchase a tour for children.

Castle café - is freely accessible during the opening hours of the castle.

WIFI - Free - we have free WIFI throughout the grounds.

Visitor room in the first courtyard - you can warm up, use the storage boxes, children's slide, write postcards, use the tips for tours etc.



CASTLE AND CHATEAU
BEČOV

Exhibition Guide Important Information

I. Reliquary of St Maurus

A self-guided tour of the museum and gallery exhibition dedicated to the Reliquary of St Maurus. During the tour, visitors will learn about the history of the reliquary, the fascinating story of its discovery and its restoration, and will see this remarkable Romanesque artefact in the treasure room.

II. Chateau Interiors

The tour takes visitors through all floors of the Baroque chateau and introduces them to the architectural development of the extensive Bečov complex and its owners. The exhibition and commentary focus primarily on the period when the Bečov estate was held by its last aristocratic owners, the Beaufort-Spontin family. The route leads through a series of salons, the library, chapel and dining room. The tour also features the diadem of Eleonore Beaufort-Spontin.

III. Castle

An exceptionally well-preserved and authentic medieval castle core, comprising a residential tower (donjon), banqueting halls known as tabulnice, and the Chapel of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary with its rich iconographic decoration. The tour is presented through educational and edutainment programmes. The project for the conservation and presentation of the castle received the prestigious international Europa Nostra Award.

IV. Liquid Treasure

An exhibition presenting a unique collection of 136 bottles of vintage wine and cognac dating from the late 19th century, which were hidden together with the Reliquary of St Maurus. This immersive visitor route is located in the original Beaufort wine cellar in the cellars of Pluhovský Palace.

Coordinates: 50.0858814° N, 12.8396809° E

Elevation: 528–566 m above sea level.



SmartGuide



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Reliquary of Saint Maur

A Romanesque jewel at Bečov Castle. This exceptional goldsmith's masterpiece from the first third of the 13th century, comparable to crown jewels in our country, holds the relics of Saints John the Baptist, Maurus, Apollinaris, and Timothy. Its intricate decoration attests to the mastery of goldsmiths of the time.

The reliquary originated in the Benedictine monastery in Florennes, Belgium, where it was commissioned. It later came into the possession of the noble Beaufort-Spontin family, who hid it beneath the floor of the castle chapel at Bečov Castle before leaving Czechoslovakia in 1945. There, it lay forgotten for 40 years.

In 1984, an American trader, Danny Douglas, attempted to purchase an unspecified historical artifact from Czechoslovakia. Alongside the negotiations, a police investigation was underway. In early November 1985, investigators uncovered the reliquary. What followed was 11 years of demanding restoration work, during which conservators had to revive forgotten goldsmithing techniques. After meticulous restoration, the reliquary regained its radiant splendor in 2002 and became a source of pride for the Karlovy Vary region.

Today, the Reliquary of Saint Maurus is accessible to the general public in a new, modern museum-gallery exhibition. Its story, full of twists and turns, along with its artistic value, makes it one of the most significant treasures of the Czech Republic.

Liquid Treasure

Along with the reliquary, 133 bottles of vintage wine, cognac, and champagne from the late 19th century were discovered in 1985. A recent expert analysis revealed that the wines are still in good condition, making the collection one of the most valuable wine collections in Europe.

The vintage wine collection was created by the Beaufort-Spontin family, who owned the site of today's State Castle and Chateau Bečov from 1813 to 1945. The collection was likely assembled before World War I as wines intended for exclusive dining after aging. The value of the collection to its owners is demonstrated by the fact that at the end of World War II, the Beaufort-Spontin family hid the 133 bottles along with the Reliquary of Saint Maurus. They likely



concealed the items with the hope of retrieving them after a few years. However, due to the political situation in Czechoslovakia during the latter half of the 20th century, the bottles were not discovered until 1985, together with the Reliquary of Saint Maurus.

Since then, they have been stored at the State Castle and Chateau Bečov. In 2011, three more bottles were discovered during an archaeological survey in the castle's bailey. They were likely hidden there by someone from the Beaufort-Spontin family's servants, also during the period of World War II.



Diadem of Eleonora Beaufort-Spontin

A high-carat diadem headpiece made of yellow gold with a thick layer of silver, currently set with 540 diamonds, was crafted in the mid-19th century. In the first half of the 20th century, it was owned by Eleonora Beaufort-Spontin, the daughter of Marie Melanie Princess de Ligne-Lamoral and Friedrich Georg Beaufort-Spontin.

Eleonora spent part of her childhood and life in Bečov. In 1916, she entered a convent but returned to Bečov in 1927, during which time she had a recreational chalet built in the Alpine style, now known as the "Villa Komtesa." Eleonora was childless and never married. She often traveled and lived in various places across Europe. After her mother Marie passed away, she inherited properties in Paris, where she relocated after World War II and where she died in 1960.

The design of the diadem suited Eleonora's lifestyle. Originally, it was stored in a jeweler-crafted box, where it was kept disassembled into two parts. Interestingly, some of the settings on the top of the crown were designed to allow the exchange of gemstones. According to experts, the diadem was accompanied by several sets of jewels (diamonds, emeralds, etc.) that Eleonora could switch out; however, these have not been preserved.

Uniquely Preserved Medieval Castle Core

Bečov Castle, likely of royal origin, ranks among the best-preserved Czech castles in the European context. It was never conquered or burned to the extent that it became a ruin or completely vanished, nor was it converted into a chateau after castles generally lost their dual role as residences and military fortresses. Following extensive High Gothic reconstruction, it no longer met the demanding representative and residential standards of the Renaissance era and was used only as an agricultural building, which inadvertently preserved its unique, authentic medieval spaces.

During the castle's initial development phase, a circular defensive tower known as a bergfrit (now the castle viewpoint)



and a residential palace were built in the area of today's so-called Pluh Houses (now partially a café). After the mid-14th century, construction began on a tower initially intended as a residence. However, the plan was soon altered, and the interior of the tower became an extraordinary Gothic chapel dedicated to the Visitation of the Virgin Mary. Subsequently, a representative residential tower known as the donjon was constructed. The residential and chapel towers were connected by a wall, to which a two-story structure, known as the tabulnic, was added during the final phase of construction. After meticulous restoration, the castle is now accessible to the public through a special program featuring educational and edutainment activities.

